Keeping beer fresher

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Researchers have identified alpha-carbonyls as important compounds that reduce beer's flavor. Credit: Courtesy of public-domain-photos.com

Scientists in Venezuela are reporting an advance in the centuries-old effort to preserve the fresh taste that beer drinkers value more than any other characteristic of that popular beverage. Their study, which identifies key substances involved in giving beer an aged or "oxidized" flavor, is scheduled for the May 28 issue of ACS' *Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry*.

In the new study, Adriana Bravo and colleagues point out that past efforts to keep beer fresh have focused on protecting beer from contact with the air throughout the brewing process. That focus, however, has resulted in only a relatively small improvement in flavor stability.

The research identified a group of poorly understood substances called alpha-carbonyls as important culprits in the decline in fresh flavor that occurs as beer ages. It also showed that levels of some of these substances could be reduced by adding ingredients that block their formation, thus making beer taste fresher longer.

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Source: ACS

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